AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please make the following changes at the indicated locations in the specification:

Page 9, first paragraph, please make the following changes in this paragraph:

In Fig. 2 a method of reducing the contamination of the glass tube 2 by means of a stopper 5 with a through-going hole is illustrated. In the case of a glass tube 2 with a tube diameter of about 1.6 cm, the [[The]] stopper 5 has a through-going hole with a diameter of 2.5 mm ~~and a tube diameter of about 1.6 cm~~. During the puncturing process at the opposite end of the glass tube 2 a slight overpressure arises in the glass tube 2 because of this narrowing or constricting of the path for gas flow through the upper end of the glass tube. This overpressure is sufficient so that air 6 heated by the jet flame 3 and thus also the arising alkali borates do not reach the tube inner surface. Because of the stopper 5 the air 6 does not displace a portion 4a of the air found in the tube 2, except for the portion 4b of the air issuing through the narrow through-going hole, which prevents a too high overpressure from building up within the glass tube 2. The too high overpressure would otherwise damage the glass tube 2 and hinder the following processing steps.